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# Sprague senior taps into title

## Bethany Massey wins the Miss Marion-Polk County 2004 pageant

BY SHAWN DAY / Statesman Journal

Bethany Massey tap-danced her way to becoming Miss Marion-Polk County 2004 late Saturday at South Salem High School.

The 18-year-old Sprague High School senior used a powerful tap performance to the tune of lively big-band music during the talent portion of the pageant and captured the title and a \$3,500 college scholarship.

"I wasn't really expecting this," Massey said moments after being crowned. "I'm really happy. And I'm proud."

With 10 years of experience tap dancing, it seemed natural that Massey chose to demonstrate her prowess Saturday night.

"It's just a passion of mine and it's something I'm comfortable doing," she said.

Massey plans to use the scholarship money toward a degree in interior architecture and design from the Academy of Art University in San Francisco.

Leslie Summers, a 22-year-old senior at Western Oregon University, was the first-runner up, earning a \$2,000 college scholarship.

Lori Northcraft, a 22-year-old senior at Willamette University, picked up a \$1,000 scholarship as the second runner-up.

The pageant, in its second year, is a preliminary contest under the Miss America program. Massey will go on to compete for the Miss Oregon title in Seaside in July.

Eleven women competed for the crown during the 2 1/2 hour program. The pageant drew about 350 people, including Miss Oregon 2003 April Robinson and Miss Marion-Polk County 2003 Blair Wolfe.

The contestants ranged in ages from 17 to 23 and included students from Oregon State University and West Salem High School. The scholarship awards were funded by donations made by area businesses and organizations, said Marc Stutman, co-executive director of the pageant.

The pageant, titled "Red, White and Beautiful," took on a patriotic theme and featured three Oregon soldiers who recently returned from duty in Iraq and Kuwait with the 1st Battalion, 162nd Infantry of the Oregon National Guard.

The soldiers, Bradley R. Beverly of Keizer, Michael S. O'Rielly of Salem, and James I. Fishback of Portland, took turns escorting contestants across the stage near the end of the ceremony.



ANDREA J. WRIGHT / Statesman Journal

WINNER: Bethany Massey performs Saturday in the Miss Marion-Polk County 2004 pageant at South Salem High School.